



**King County**

**Department of Community and Human Services  
August 2010**

**Domestic Violence Survivor Services**

**A Report Responding to a Proviso  
in King County Budget Ordinance #16717**

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#### **Executive summary**

King County provides a broad range of emergency response and assistance programs to help survivors of domestic violence (DV) reclaim a measure of safety and a means to secure a violence-free future. Many partners and participants across county government play a role in the DV system, including the courts, law enforcement, the prosecutor's office, public health, and community and human services. Key stakeholders outside county government include community-based agencies, housing providers, the City of Seattle and the suburban cities, and philanthropic organizations including United Way of King County and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The ability to effectively respond and help individuals and families in need depends upon these partnerships.

The recently adopted King County Strategic Plan includes the goal of supporting safe communities and accessible justice systems for all as a priority in the justice and safety category. One of the stated objectives within this goal area is to keep people safe in their homes and communities, including the specific strategy of providing programs and support for individuals exposed to violence – especially relevant to victims of DV. The strategic plan also calls for strengthening King County's collaborations with cities and communities, which are critical partners in the DV response system.

The current economic climate and the county's continuing budget deficits have directly impacted DV programs and services, particularly those previously or currently funded with ever-diminishing General Fund (GF) dollars. A small, but important, piece of the support for the individuals and families impacted by DV is provided by the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) through service contracts with community-based agencies. Funding for those services is in question, due to uncertainties of the GF.

The 2010 King County budget, adopted by the Metropolitan King County Council through Ordinance 16717, provided a limited amount of GF dollars to support DV services, but the continuing economic challenge means those dollars are uncertain for 2011 and beyond. Looking ahead, the budget ordinance included a proviso that called upon DCHS to produce a report on "how King County funds shall be distributed to support domestic violence survivor services" and to submit that report to the King County Council by September 1, 2010.

The proviso called on DCHS to consult with key stakeholders to prepare the report. Among the stakeholders consulted were DV shelter and survivor services providers and staff from the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, both through surveys and meetings. The DCHS also consulted with representatives of the county's criminal justice agencies, and shared early drafts of this report with the Office of Management and Budget and with King County Council staff.

The report is to specifically address the following issues:

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#### **I. Services to be provided by domestic violence service agencies**

Section I provides descriptions of the established best and promising practices for an effective DV response system, including the importance of providing community-based services along with law enforcement and other criminal justice services. The services provided by community-based agencies in an effective response system include emergency shelter and stable housing, advocacy and support services that include safety planning, legal assistance, programs and supports specifically for children who have witnessed DV, and more. The first section provides an overview of regional planning efforts focused on DV spanning the past 20 years, including key efforts in recent years to improve regional response and system coordination and highlighting the need for continuing efforts in these areas.

The respective roles of the many partners within the county that are involved in the effort to end DV are described, notably, the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO), the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO), King County Superior Court (KCSC), King County District Court (KDC), the Department of Judicial Administration (DJA), and the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD). The role of DCHS is linked to the provision of services through contracts with community-based agencies. The services these agencies provide in King County are described, and a chart listing the specific agencies and the best and promising practice programs and services that each of them provides is included. The need for continued collaboration across county government and between government and community-based agencies is clear.

#### **II. Roles of population and geography in accessing, delivering, and funding domestic violence services**

The proviso requested an exploration of the roles of population and geography, and Section II attempts to identify demographic and geographic characteristics of the county that impact access to services, service delivery and funding decisions.

King County is an extraordinarily diverse region, and it is trending toward increasing diversity. United Way of King County's 2007 Community Assessment found that 117 different languages are spoken in King County, that nearly one-quarter of King County residents speak a language other than English in their home, and that nearly 11 percent speak English less than very well. Immigrants and refugees continue to settle in King County, with an increase in East and West African populations, people from the former Soviet Union, and refugees from Burma and Bhutan. While one-quarter of the county's residents speak a language other than English at home, DV agencies report that three-fifths of their clients speak a language other than English – highlighting the need to address and improve cultural competency in planning for and providing DV services in the region.

In looking at the issue of geographic distribution, the report notes that, only three of the 17 agencies have primary service locations in the balance of the county; one on the east side and two in South King County. Yet two thirds of the county's population resides outside of the City

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of Seattle. It is clear that Seattle residents have greater access to and choice in the services available to them than the residents in the balance of the county.

The current distribution of DCHS funding for community-based DV services is described, including a chart of 2010 contractors and the services they provide by fund source, e.g., county community services and GF dollars, housing funds, and the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) sales tax revenues.

### **III. An assessment of competitive and noncompetitive domestic violence funding distribution models**

The proviso asked for an assessment of competitive and noncompetitive DV funding distribution models. Section III explores both options.

The City of Seattle and United Way of King County both use a Request for Proposal (RFP) model for allocating their DV funds. Both utilize a two-year grant period and are specific in the services that they wish to purchase, spelling out requirements in the RFPs. Many of the county's suburban cities also use a competitive process to allocate human services funds, although not specifically for DV services. Of note is the collaboration amongst 17 suburban cities to create a common application process so that agencies applying for human services funds in one city can prepare one set of application materials to submit to all cities in which they wish to provide services, rather than preparing 17 different responses. The cities are also working together to align performance measures, outcomes and reporting requirements to further reduce administrative burdens for community agencies.

While DCHS uses a competitive process to allocate funds for many areas of human services, it does not do so for DV. The budget for these services has long been itemized in the annual budget, precluding the option to conduct a competitive process. Utilizing a competitive model allows for greater flexibility in adjusting to changing needs, enhances transparency and accountability, affords greater ability to direct performance measures and desired outcomes, increases opportunities for new providers to compete for funds, and creates more objectivity in the decision-making process about funding allocation. On the other hand, RFPs require staff time for both the agency and the county, and create some unpredictability and potential instability for providers.

Alternatively, the state Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) uses a noncompetitive, formula-model with targeted add-ons to distribute its DV funds. A formula model ensures that all designated agencies will get at least some money, based on their established share of the available resources. King County uses a formula model to distribute funding for its Youth and Family Services Association (YFSA) agencies to ensure a base level of support. While this may provide some measured stability for agencies (assuming a sufficient and stable amount of funding is available), it diminishes the county's flexibility to adjust to emerging needs or changing circumstances such as declining funding levels, and makes it harder for new agencies to get a foot in the door. Establishing performance measures and standards is also more difficult, but not impossible, with a formula model. A formula distribution model is only an option if the

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available funding is enough to provide a base level of support for all designated agencies, with additional funds for targeted or emerging needs, and if that available funding is stable. That is not currently the case in King County.

#### **IV. Recommendations on the process and outcomes for distributing King County funds to domestic violence victim services agencies**

King County plays a strong role in regional human services – as a convener, a provider, and a funder. The county plays a similarly strong role in the criminal justice system. Given the continuing economic crisis and shrinking resources at all levels of government and in fundraising for nonprofits, it is more critical than ever that the public and private sectors work together to make the best possible use of scarce resources. This is also a value of the King County Strategic Plan, particularly as it pertains to strengthening King County’s collaborative role with cities and communities.

For these and other reasons, transitioning to a competitive process for the county’s limited resources is recommended. This report notes the need for ensuring culturally relevant and culturally appropriate services for the county’s very diverse population, and recognizes the majority of such programs are currently located in Seattle. In working more closely with stakeholders (including philanthropy, United Way, City of Seattle, suburban cities, and providers) in developing the RFP, this would ensure targeted funding to help maintain or improve geographic access to services for residents outside Seattle, including residents with specific needs. A competitive process allows for greater flexibility in establishing targeted priorities for services, and adjusting those priorities as needed for each funding round, including coordinating with other county fund sources and RFP processes. By setting at least a two-year funding round, the impact on agency and county staff in preparing and responding to an RFP could be reduced, as would some of the concerns about funding insecurity. Even if funding is reduced, all agencies would have the opportunity to apply for the funding available, putting their best programs and services forward in a competitive process.

Additional coordination with stakeholders, will allow for developing and aligning outcome and performance measures, reporting requirements and other components. In the end, this new approach should yield greater efficiencies, more equitable access to services and better cross system and cross jurisdictional coordination and collaboration.

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#### **Introduction**

In King County, DV is a critical public safety issue. According to statewide statistics related to DV compiled by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, there were reports of 12 murders, 645 aggravated assaults, 5,160 simple assaults, and 1,929 protection order violations in King County in 2008. The situation appears to be worsening: the PAO reported a five percent increase in police referrals for DV crimes in 2009, and filed more cases in 2009 than any prior year.

King County recognizes the importance of public safety, and the issue of DV in particular. One of the major goals of the proposed King County Strategic Plan is to support safe communities and accessible justice systems for all. An associated strategy is to provide programs and support for individuals exposed to violence. In 2010, the county's criminal justice agencies have budgeted a total of \$8,111,079 specifically for DV-related law enforcement and justice activities. In addition, Public Health - Seattle & King County (PHSKC) budgeted grant funds totaling \$30,000, the DCHS budgeted \$1,738,233 from a variety of sources, including Community Services Operating (CSO), Housing and Community Development, and MIDD to support community-based survivor services.

Given that King County is in the midst of a severe budget crisis, it will be a challenge to continue supporting DV services at current levels. Particularly at risk is the DCHS budget for community-based survivor services. These services were supplemented with a one-time infusion of \$627,101 in county GF in 2010. While this infusion allowed the county to maintain funding for these services at levels close to previous years, it is uncertain whether the county will be able to continue this level of support in 2011 and beyond.

In large part due to this budget crisis, the Metropolitan King County Council added a proviso to the 2010 budget (Ordinance 16717) requiring DCHS to produce a report on "how King County funds shall be distributed to support domestic violence survivor services." The proviso asked DCHS specifically to include the following:

1. Identification of services to be provided by DV service agencies
2. The roles of population and geography in accessing, delivering, and funding DV services
3. An assessment of competitive and noncompetitive DV funding distribution models, such as the Washington State DSHS allocation of DV shelter funds, and whether competitive and noncompetitive contracting approaches could be utilized for distribution of King County funds
4. Recommendations on the process and outcomes for distributing King County funds to DV victim services agencies.

This report has been prepared in response to the proviso, which has four sections corresponding to the four requirements above.

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The DCHS consulted with stakeholders from the DV survivor services community, including DV shelter and survivor services providers and the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Specifically, 17 DV shelter and survivor services providers were invited to complete a survey. A stakeholders meeting was held in May 2010 for the 11 DV providers and two sexual assault providers currently funded by DCHS. The agenda for the meeting included an overview of the proviso response, discussion of funding models, discussion of survivor services to be provided, and regional DV issues. Providers were presented with a preliminary draft report with a request to provide feedback by a specific date. An updated draft report was later sent to providers in July 2010 for additional comments. Providers' comments were considered and incorporated when relevant to the report. In addition, key stakeholders were identified and individually interviewed by DCHS staff. These key stakeholders included a Superior Court Judge, prosecuting attorney from the DV unit, executive directors from four agencies (one being culturally specific), one former executive director (currently a consultant), a regional director of a DV agency, and a nurse from PHSKC. Staff from the King County Office of Management and Budget and King County Council were provided an early draft report by e-mail on May 20, 2010 and given an opportunity to provide comments. Also consulted were representatives from KCSC and DJA.

#### **I. Services to be provided by domestic violence service agencies**

The services provided by community-based agencies are part of a larger DV response system that also involves law enforcement, the courts, the prosecuting attorney and the DJA. There are best practices related to the components that need to be present in an effective system. King County's current system has been created over time, in response to several planning initiatives undertaken over the past 20 years. An overview of those initiatives is included in this section.

##### **A. Brief summary of best and promising practices in responding to domestic violence**

There are two key national sources for best and promising practices<sup>1</sup> in the field of DV.

The first source is The DV Toolkit: A Toolkit to End Violence Against Women prepared by the National Advisory Council on Violence Against Women (November 2001). This toolkit was developed as a guideline for communities, policy leaders, and individuals working to end DV. It takes a broad look at the wide range of roles that must be played by multiple systems – from law enforcement and the courts to the media and faith communities to human service providers – for a community to have an effective DV response system. It covers 16 separate areas, each focusing on a particular aspect of the system, from prevention to civil and criminal justice to services and advocacy for survivors and more. The chapters include best practice recommendations for a range of systems and professions from experts in the field. What this toolkit makes clear is that an effective response cannot be limited solely to the criminal justice

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<sup>1</sup>A best practice is defined as a service determined effective by research study using experimental design. A promising practice is defined as a service that has not had rigorous clinical studies conducted, but which has demonstrated some success.



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system, but must involve community-based agencies. Each has specific roles that complement the roles of the other.

The second source is a body of work by Cris Sullivan, Ph.D., a nationally recognized authority on DV services. In a 2007 report, *A Review of the Evidence Underlying Domestic Violence Victim Service Programs*, Dr. Sullivan reviews the effectiveness of DV-related victim services typically provided by community-based agencies. The report supports the long-term effectiveness of DV services in reducing the risk of re-abuse, and increasing the likelihood of positive emotional/mental health outcomes for the survivors. In particular, Dr. Sullivan found that contacting a DV program and staying at a DV shelter dramatically reduced the likelihood that a woman would be abused again. Shelters provide not only a safe roof overhead, but also associated support services like education, counseling and safety planning, that help survivors recognize abusive behavior, evaluate risks to safety, and identify ways to reduce that risk. Safety planning has emerged as a critical component that effectively enhances the continued safety of DV survivors. In large part due to this and additional work by Dr. Sullivan, the federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Administration now recommends the development and use of safety plans, and has set a standard for the community agencies it funds that at least 65 percent of the agency's clients will develop safety plans.

Both reports point to the need for a community to have a systematic response to DV that does not stop at the justice system, but extends to services provided by community-based agencies. The community-based services that are deemed best practices or promising practices for an effective DV response system by Dr. Sullivan and/or the DV Toolkit are listed in Table A below.

**Table A. Services Identified as Best or Promising Practices**

<b>DV Services</b>	<b>Best Practice</b>	<b>Promising Practice</b>
Advocacy/support services (including safety planning)	X	
Legal advocacy	X	
Crisis information and referral	X	
Shelters/transitional housing	X	
Culturally specific services	X	
Community education	X	
Support groups		X
Mental health services <sup>2</sup>		X
Children's programs		X

#### **B. Summary of past and current King County domestic violence planning efforts**

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<sup>2</sup> DV programs provide comprehensive services and referrals, which may include mental health services. Some programs have a licensed mental health professional (LMHP) as part of their program and available to clients. Other DV agencies may have an LMHP that is not DV specific, but available as a separate referral.

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King County's DV system, and the role of the community-based providers within it, has grown in recent years partly in response to national studies such as those summarized above, and also because of several DV plans and reports that have been undertaken by county government and others over the past 20 plus years. These plans have helped build King County's current DV system.

#### King County Domestic Violence Comprehensive Plan, Phases I and II, 1988-1995

In 1988, a multi-year DV comprehensive plan effort was launched by the leadership of King County government, including the DJA, DCHS, and an advisory group of human service planners, community-based victim service providers, and law and justice agencies. The DV comprehensive plan had two phases.

Phase I was in response to regional occurrences of DV. The focus was on further development of existing responses and services for victims and determining the most effective methods of batterer accountability. It consisted of three components: coordination of the response system, the community-based services system, and the law and justice system. The result was a nationally recognized, coordinated, and regional response to DV, which:

- Enhanced understanding across community agencies and legal jurisdictions of their roles in responding to DV
- Established the DV Coordinating Committee within King County government to address systems issues surrounding DV
- Established court-based advocates to assist survivors through the legal system as a witness in criminal cases and to assist in obtaining civil protection orders
- Established a training curriculum for community service providers and law, safety, and justice system professionals
- Developed a public education campaign
- Provided new county funds for DV survivor services including advocacy and shelters
- Dedicated two detectives and two staff through the KCSO for DV issues.

Phase II of the plan was developed in 1995 by the DV Coordinating Committee formed in Phase I, with the goal of eliminating DV. The committee developed a five-year plan with three components focused on prevention of DV, interventions for both survivors and batterers, and system coordination and evaluation. Phase II resulted in the following:

- It increased prevention efforts, prioritized the safety of victims and their children, and provided for increased accountability for those who commit acts of DV. It identified specific service gaps, and encouraged broader system coordination.
- For prevention, a public Love Shouldn't Hurt campaign was launched, and enough money was raised to develop and distribute 75,000 Love Shouldn't Hurt brochures in six languages, as well as creating a Warning Signs display and conducting a number of other

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awareness activities. Internal to King County, DV awareness training was provided to all King County employees.

- The intervention component, in addition to focusing on improved services to adult victims of DV, also focused on the effects of DV on children, and on identifying appropriate help for children who experienced DV. (See the discussion of the subsequent DV and Child Maltreatment Response Guideline section of this report). It also emphasized treatment for batterers.
- It enhanced internal King County systems coordination. The KCSO and the PAO agreed to track DV occurrences, including calls into 911, police reports referred to the PAO for criminal charges, and the number of protection orders filed and issued. The KCSO also expanded the number of detectives designated to the DV unit. The legal system enhanced its programs by creating coordinated efforts for DV cases including probation officers, adult detention's program to notify victims of a defendant's release, family court system with dedicated social workers, and the juvenile justice system screening of youth for DV.

#### Human Services Roundtable Domestic Violence Task Force, 1990, and subsequent DCHS Progress Report, 2001

During this same time period, the Human Services Roundtable, an inter-jurisdictional body addressing regional human services issues, created a DV task force consisting of community leaders, King County Councilmembers, mayors, law enforcement, city planners, prosecutors, and community-based service providers to develop a DV report involving both local and regional responses.

The 1990 Human Services Roundtable DV Task Force Report sought to improve human service delivery and funding throughout King County by acting as a catalyst for change at the local, as well as regional level. The report called for system improvement in five areas: increased leadership at the local jurisdiction level; expansion of service delivery countywide (including culturally-relevant services); education, training and protocol development; state legislative advocacy; and system coordination.

In 2001, a progress report conducted by DCHS reviewed the impact of the Human Services Roundtable DV Task Force Report by looking at the clients served through the 15 King County-funded DV service agencies from 1995 to 1999. The report included population served, types of services, and the impact the services had on individuals and their families. Approximately 11,000 women had received services over the five year period. There was a ten percent increase in services received by people of color, with the largest increase in Asian and Hispanic ethnicities. There was a 94 percent increase in the number of women seeking transitional housing. Half of the women studied over the period had sought court orders. Ninety-three percent said their situation improved because of the services received, specifically from the assistance of emotional support. Ninety-five percent said they had developed a safety plan.

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About 39 percent of the clients served by these county-funded agencies over the five-year period lived in Seattle, 30 percent lived in South King County and 14 percent lived in East King County. The remaining 17 percent lived in North King County and other areas.

The progress report raised some concerns about remaining obstacles and gaps in service. One concern was the lack of affordable housing, which also hindered women from obtaining employment. Another concern was the lack of child care and child counseling. Over half of the women seeking services had children who witnessed the violence, yet there were no services available for these children.

#### Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Response Guidelines, 2002-2007

In 2002, Washington State Supreme Court Justice Bobbe Bridge recognized the overlap between cases involving DV and child maltreatment. Justice Bridge initiated a statewide effort to develop and adopt a coordinated systems response protocol. A protocol template was developed in 2005 providing a framework and governing principles for each DSHS region in Washington State.

In 2005, PHSKC, with funding support from DCHS for its staff, coordinated a summit in the King County region which drew over 80 community stakeholders. After the summit, this staff led a multi-system effort to create guidelines for the DV and Child Maltreatment Response in King County. In March 2007, the guidelines were finalized and published. The guidelines provide for effective, coordinated multi-systems response in King County for children, ages birth through age 17, who are affected by DV and child abuse/neglect. These guidelines help to ensure that the actions of one agency do not compromise the goals of other agencies. They serve to improve responses and services, increase the safety of children, support the non-offending DV survivors, and increase accountability for DV perpetrators.

#### Domestic Violence Community Services System Report, 2008

In February 2008, the directors of community-based DV programs in King County came together to discuss further directions for their collaborative work to end DV. They established a joint vision: "...strong, connected communities that support and sustain equitable, respectful, loving relationships and families; where community members are informed about DV and working toward solutions; and where survivors and their families receive support and can easily access quality services."

The group focused on three areas: increased awareness and action; improved access; and ensured quality service. Based on an evaluation of accomplishments, emerging ideas, and current gaps, the group developed eight key strategies to achieve their vision: 1) raise their voice and visibility; 2) increase community engagement; 3) increase the impact of the services system; 4) increase access to services for all survivors; 5) increase the capacity of programs; 6) advocate for policy changes; 7) learn and document; and 8) collaborate.

#### Ending Family Homelessness Initiative, 2009-2011

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Domestic violence is a major contributor to family homelessness. In 2009, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation launched an initiative in coordination with King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties aimed at ending family homelessness through fundamentally rethinking and changing the way family homelessness is addressed. The DCHS is the lead for King County, working in coordination with the Gates Foundation and their partner, Building Changes, as well as with a broad array of funders (including United Way of King County, the City of Seattle and others), community agencies, DV and family emergency shelter and transitional housing providers, consumer representatives and others. The initiative is focused on creating change in the following five key areas:

1. Coordinated entry and assessment. To give families a convenient and standard way to find the services and housing they need as quickly as possible
2. Prevention of homelessness for families most at risk. To keep families on the edge of homelessness housed and quickly connect them to the services they need
3. Moving families quickly to stable housing. To move families into permanent (non time-limited) housing as quickly as possible
4. Focusing support services on housing stability. To provide individual families with the right services at the right time
5. Ensuring that homeless services include linkages to mainstream services to support families. To connect families to the services they need to maintain housing stability and self-sufficiency

The Gates Foundation is making funds available to support implementation of the system changes, and in 2011, will begin making additional funds available to community-based agencies, including agencies currently providing DV emergency shelters and transitional housing, to help them change their services to fit the new model.

The Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence has also received a Gates Foundation grant to work on this initiative and help promote system change among DV providers statewide.

#### Domestic Violence Initiative, 2010

In 2010, the PAO partnered with the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence (a community-based agency focused on advocacy, education, and coordination with the broader DV response system, including the criminal justice system) to create the Domestic Violence Initiative Task Force, with the goal of taking practical steps to improve the effectiveness of the regional law enforcement and justice system's response to DV, through reaching out and improving coordination with other jurisdictions' justice agencies. A subcommittee has been formed to take on issues related to protection orders; additional subcommittees will be established as needed. The purpose of this initiative is on taking practical steps to improve the effectiveness of our region's legal response to DV, not to be an overall DV discussion or coordination forum.

**C. The internal county role of the law and justice system**

King County plays a specific role in the regional DV response system through its legally mandated civil and criminal justice responsibilities, which are budgeted as part of King County's internal operations. The civil and criminal remedies are an effective way to hold abusers accountable for their behavior, giving survivors and their families a chance at safety and an improved quality of life. This section offers a brief overview, beginning with key state statutes that provide the context.

State statutes concerning domestic violence

State law Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 10.99 recognizes DV as a serious crime against society, assuring victims of DV will receive the maximum protection from abuse that the law and those who enforce the law can provide. In addition, RCW 26.50.010 provides definitions for DV, family or household members, dating relationships, former spouse and other terms that are significant to DV.

King County Sheriff's Office

The KCSO enforces the law in the geographic areas where the county has jurisdiction, responding to reports of DV and protection order violations, conducting investigations, and making arrests. The work of the KCSO deputies, as well as local cities' police officers, often puts their lives at the same risk as the DV victims. In 2009, the DV unit was dismantled due to budget reductions. Follow-up on DV misdemeanor cases is completed by two burglary larceny detectives located at the precincts as time is available. The county's 2010 budget for the KCSO includes Services, Training, Officers and Prosecutors (STOP) grant funds of \$44,578 for officers to attend DV trainings and \$208,160 for detective follow-up case work.

King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office

The responsibilities of the PAO are to prosecute all felony DV cases and misdemeanor DV cases from unincorporated King County, to provide victim advocacy in criminal cases, and protection order advocacy services for victims of DV who are seeking a civil protection order.

The PAO includes a DV unit created in early 2000. The DV unit of the PAO includes 21 prosecutors, six paralegals, and 10 criminal case legal advocates that assist DV victims while the criminal case is proceeding. The DV unit conducts local and national training and advocates for needed DV legislation. The PAO's Protection Order Advocacy Program includes six full-time and three part-time protection order advocates who provide petitioners assistance with completion of the protection order, court support, and safety planning and referrals. The PAO also has a STOP grant that funds a project coordinator who organizes training and countywide projects to improve the prosecution and law enforcement response to DV. In 2010, the PAO created the Domestic Violence Initiative Task Force in partnership with the Coalition Against Domestic Violence, to improve coordination with other jurisdictions and address cross-

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jurisdictional issues such as enforcement of protection orders. The county's 2010 budget for DV-related services in the PAO is \$3,956,724.

#### King County District Court

King County District Court established a DV court for misdemeanor cases in 2001. The goals are to provide access to coordinated services for victims of DV and their families, and to provide access to justice and fairness to all parties involved. The DV court centralized all misdemeanor DV cases from 12 outlying district courts to the Maleng Regional Justice Center for fast track handling and intensive management. The DV court has two probation officers trained in supervising DV offenders. The outlying district courts no longer handle any DV cases. The county's 2010 budget for DV-related services at District Court is \$1,376,970.

#### King County Superior Court

The KCSC hears felony DV criminal cases, protection order petitions, and family law matters including dissolutions, child support, adoptions, and parentage. The KCSC's Unified Family Court combines court actions and hearings for matters involving the same family and allows for coordination of evaluations and social services, including when DV is an issue. Essentially, it can be considered as a one-judge, one-family approach that is used for all related family law and juvenile actions. This approach establishes consistent expectations for the family, enables the court to monitor progress, and makes efficient use of resources. The KCSC's Family Court Services (FCS) program has a role in responding to DV cases by offering several services to parents involved in family law matters. The types of cases that reach the FCS program are generally dissolutions, modifications of existing parenting plans and petitions for protection orders. The county's 2010 budget for DV related services at Superior Court is \$2,080,450.

#### Department of Judicial Administration

The DJA has employed a Law, Safety, and Justice DV program manager who develops DV policy for the criminal justice system, but this position was eliminated in the 2010 budget. The DJA offers assistance with DV, anti-harassment, sexual assault, and vulnerable adult protection orders, both at the regional justice center in Kent and in Seattle.<sup>3</sup> The county's 2010 budget for DV related services in DJA is \$382,997.

#### The Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention

Domestic violence offenders are incarcerated at either the King County Jail in Seattle or the Maleng Regional Justice Center in Kent. The Victim Information and Notification Everyday (VINE) system is an automated notification system that notifies survivors registering a phone number or email when there is a change in an inmate's custody status at the DAJD. The VINE

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<sup>3</sup> The Juvenile Court also offers Step-Up, a program that counsels teens who display violent behaviors towards family members. It is a DV intervention program designed to focus on treatment of perpetrators and not on survivors. The focus of this report is on survivor services.

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system is available in six languages, including English. The county's 2010 budget for the Vine Program at DAJD is \$61,200.

#### Safe Havens Visitation Center (City of Kent)

While not a responsibility of King County, Safe Havens is included here because it offers a service connected to court-ordered visitation. In 2002, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women awarded the City of Kent a grant for a pilot site for supervised visitation and exchanges. In 2005, Safe Havens opened for business. Safe Havens provides a secure and safe environment for supervised visitation and exchanges for non-custodial parents with their children. Program participation is primarily by court order where a judge has restricted visitation or exchanges for non-custodial parents involved with DV. The program currently serves approximately 45-55 families in King County, and is establishing a connection with King County's coordinated response to DV and the needs of DV survivors. This program is gaining national recognition for its commitment in addressing safety needs of DV survivors during supervised visitations. However, its future is uncertain due to difficulties securing ongoing operating funds. King County contributed \$10,000 during 2010.

#### The Domestic Violence Council

In 2000, the King County Prosecuting Attorney, Executive, and Sheriff formed a high-level, multi-department DV Council. Members of the DV Council also included representatives from the DJA, DAJD, PHSKC and DCHS, as well as representatives of the City of Seattle and the King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, which represents community-based DV agencies. The council met quarterly with a focus on guiding a collaborative interdepartmental effort to increase coordination, support new DV legislation, and improve the county's response to DV. In 2009, the DV Council was restructured into a subcommittee of the broader Criminal Justice Council, and that subcommittee has not yet reconvened.

#### **D. The role of community-based domestic violence agencies in King County**

Community-based agencies provide DV services that are a critical part of an effective DV response system, as noted in the earlier discussion of best practices and as recognized by over 20 years of regional planning in King County. Unlike the criminal justice system, there is no legal mandate for the county to support community-based agencies. King County provides approximately \$8 million for its internal criminal justice agencies to respond to DV, compared to approximately \$1.7 million for community-based agencies to provide shelter and other survivor services (see Table C on pages 29 and 30). Community-based agencies must gather a wide variety of grants and fund sources, from state and federal sources, King County and local jurisdictions, and private donations.

Despite the funding concerns, the community-based DV agencies have collectively managed to provide all the services listed earlier as best practices and promising practices for an effective DV response system. However, even in the best of economic times, agencies have not been able to meet the demand for either the level or the range of services survivors in our region need.



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These best and promising services, as they have been provided in King County, are described in more detail below, and Table B identifies which agencies have been providing which services in our region. To what extent the agencies can continue to raise the necessary funding to provide these services, and to what extent King County can continue to contribute funding support, remain open questions.

#### Advocacy/support services

All community-based DV agencies in King County provide DV advocates or counselors that work in partnership with clients to identify and address a wide variety of client needs. These include safety planning, as well as assistance finding housing, economic assistance, access to medical and mental health care, emotional support, case management, and other assistance depending on the needs of the client and the capacity of the agency.

#### Legal advocacy

Legal advocates provide survivors with information about the court system, explaining legal options, accompanying survivors to court for civil, criminal, and immigration matters, and making referrals to legal services agencies.

#### Crisis information and referral

Agencies provide DV crisis lines that provide crisis counseling, information and referral, as well as some level of advocacy and support services for DV survivors, their friends, or their family members over the phone. These crisis lines often serve as the first point of access to shelter and other services. A few agencies do operate 24-hour crisis lines.

#### Emergency shelter and transitional housing programs

Emergency shelters and safe houses provide temporary refuge, as well as food and clothing on a 24-hour, seven-day-per-week basis to DV survivors and their children. King County has six shelters in confidential locations and have systems in place to protect the physical safety of residents who are fleeing dangerous abusers; all six offer adult and child residents a range of services and assistance. Other family emergency shelters that are not in confidential locations will also house DV survivors and their children, and may provide DV supportive services. In addition, several King County DV agencies have motel vouchers to house families on a time-limited basis.

Six King County DV agencies operate transitional housing programs, which provide longer-term (generally up to two years) housing and supportive services to homeless individuals or families. The transitional housing may be facility-based, or it may consist of time-limited rental subsidies, or a combination. The primary purpose is to help homeless individuals or families make the transition from shelter into more independent living and non-time-limited housing.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Our region's Committee to End Homelessness in King County has encouraged a housing first model where homeless families can skip the transitional housing step and be placed more quickly into non-time-limited housing, with supportive services where necessary. The county's

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#### The Day One Program

The Day One Program is an important enhancement to the DV shelter system in King County. It is a secured DV shelter bed database that is designed to quickly locate an available shelter bed for someone fleeing domestic violence on day one. The client, who may be in an unsafe situation, only needs to make one call to a participating agency, and the advocate at the shelter can access all other participating shelters to check on bed availability through a linked data system, without the client having to call each shelter and possibly be turned away multiple times before securing a space. Transportation may also be arranged. Agency participation in the Day One Program is voluntary, but participating shelters are required to update bed availability in the database on a regular basis.

#### Culturally specific services

In King County, there are a number of agencies providing DV survivor services for specific cultural groups or groups with special needs. These groups include, but are not limited to, Alaskan Natives/American Indians, Asians, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, Latino/Hispanics, African-Americans, Jewish survivors, Christian survivors, deaf and hard of hearing people, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgendered people, and victims of human trafficking.

All DV agencies incorporate cultural competency into their services. There are a few DV agencies whose primary services are not culturally specific but employ advocates that are bilingual and/or provide support groups in culturally specific languages. For example, a joint effort by New Beginnings and Consejo Counseling and Referral Service provides Peace in the Home, a 24-hour access phone service for Spanish-speaking survivors who need immediate advocacy and safety planning.

#### Community education

Most agencies provide some level of education and training, including community events, outreach activities, advocacy and coordination with legal and the criminal justice system, education and coordination with other service systems, school districts, etc.

The King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence is a community program that focuses entirely on education and coordination with the broader DV response system, including the county's justice system. The coalition supports other DV services agencies by improving collaboration and coordination between the victim advocacy programs, connects victim advocacy programs to criminal and civil legal systems, advocates on behalf of community-based agencies, and coordinates system change efforts with the larger DV response system. It is

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Ending Family Homelessness Initiative, supported through a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant, builds on this model, which avoids the disruption of moving families and school children multiple times. Under the housing first model, it is the services, not the family, which would be transitioned after a time if they were no longer necessary, or continued if they were still necessary. The housing first model emphasizes the need to create permanent affordable housing rather than transitional housing, and the need to ensure the availability of supportive services when and where they are needed.

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currently working with the PAO on the DV Initiative Task Force discussed on previous pages. While the coalition plays an important role in the DV system, it is not one of the 17 DV direct service providers.

#### Support groups

Most agencies provide support groups for survivors of DV, often in multiple locations. These can help address survivors' feelings of isolation by providing opportunities to meet and share experiences with other DV survivors in a supportive environment. Having a safe place to talk about their needs, situations, and plans can help give survivors new insights into their own situations. Clients can participate in whatever way feels comfortable to them.

#### Mental health services

In addition to general advocacy and support services, some agencies offer specialized mental health services for adults and/or children through a LMHP. Several agencies in King County now receive funding for this through the county's MIDD dollars, which provide for assessment and treatment of mental health and substance abuse issues. Mental health treatment for children is also available through the DV Children's Response Teams discussed below.

#### Children's programs and services

Programs and services for children who have been exposed to DV have been identified as a promising practice, and several agencies in King County have such programs. One program offered by some local providers is Kids' Club, which is based on a national model and offers support and information to help children deal with their exposure to DV. This program can increase a child's feeling of safety, decrease stress, anxiety and depression, and improve school readiness. Another program offered by some local providers is the MIDD-funded DV Children's Response Team, which pairs DV advocates with mental health providers to serve children experiencing difficulties due to the effects of living with DV. Most children's programs also offer a variety of therapeutic and social/recreational services for children and parenting support to their protective parent.

The following table lists all DV agencies considered to be part of our region's DV system, as listed in The Domestic Violence Handbook created by the King County Council in response to the DV Regional Plan with an updated edition coordinated by DCHS and DJA in 2008.

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**Table B. DV Community Agencies in King County and the Best and Promising Practice Services They Provide**

Agency	Best Practices						Promising Practices		
	Advocacy/ Support Services	Legal Advocacy	Crisis Information and Referral	Shelters/ Transitional Housing	Culturally Specific Services	Community Education	Support Groups	Mental Health Services	Children's Programs
Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services	X	X	X	X	X (Deaf and Hard of Hearing)	X	X		
Asian Counseling and Referral Services	X		X		X (Asians, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders)	X	X	X <sup>3</sup>	
Asian Pacific Islander Women & Family Safety Center	X		X		X (Victims of human trafficking and Asians)	X			
Chaya	X		X		X (Asian)	X	X		
Consejo Counseling and Referral Services	X	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>	X (Latino/Hispanic)	X	X	X <sup>3</sup>	
Domestic Abuse Women's Network	X	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>	X
Eastside Domestic Violence Program	X	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>	X
Jewish Family Services	X		X		Jewish	X	X		
King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence <sup>5</sup>						X			
New Beginnings	X	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>		X	X	X <sup>2</sup>	X
Northwest Family Life	X		X		Christian faith based		X		

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<sup>5</sup> The King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence is included in this table because of its integral role in coordinating and advocating for DV direct services agencies. However, it is not counted as one of the 17 direct services agencies.

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Agency	Best Practices						Promising Practices		
	Advocacy/ Support Services	Legal Advocacy	Crisis Information and Referral	Shelters/ Transitional Housing	Culturally Specific Services	Community Education	Support Groups	Mental Health Services	Children's Programs
Northwest Network	X	X	X		X (Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender)	X	X		
Refugee Women's Alliance	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>		X (Refugee and immigrant women)	X	X	X <sup>2</sup>	
Salvation Army - Catherine Booth House	X		X	X <sup>1</sup>		X	X		X
Seattle Indian Health Board	X		X		X (American Indian and Alaska Native)		X		
Solid Ground - Broadview Shelter	X	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>		X	X	X <sup>3</sup>	X
United Indians of All Tribes	X		X		X (American Indian families)		X		
YWCA	X	X	X	X <sup>1</sup>		X	X	X <sup>3</sup>	X

1. Also participates in the Day One Program

2. DV specific mental health: the DV program comprehensive services include mental health services provided by a LMHP

3. Non-DV specific mental health: the DV program may have an LMHP that is available as a separate referral to DV clients

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In summary, the services provided by our region's community-based DV agencies are a critical component of a larger DV response system that also involves law enforcement, prosecutors, and the courts, among others. This system has evolved in response to several regional planning initiatives, and the services provided by community-based agencies are based upon best or promising practices in the field. It is important to acknowledge the role that they play, and to recognize that our DV response system is a partnership between government and these community-based agencies, which are in turn supported by a variety of fund sources, including private donations and philanthropy as well as federal, state, and local governments.

## **II. The roles of population and geography in accessing, delivering, and funding domestic violence services**

Community-based DV agencies in our region have built up their current service system over many years. The budget proviso requires a discussion of "the roles of population and geography in accessing, delivering, and funding Domestic Violence survivor services". This report explores the demographic characteristics of the population, and the geographic distribution of the population within the county. Both factors influence access and delivery of services.

### **A. Demographic characteristics**

Approximately 1.9 million people call King County home<sup>6</sup>. There are almost equal numbers of women and men. Local DV agencies serve primarily women (83 percent of those served by county-funded agencies in 2008 were women). People over age 64 constitute 10.7 percent of the population and county-funded DV agencies reported that 1.4 percent of their clients were over 60 years of age. This correlates with a national report which suggests that older women may be somewhat less likely to use DV shelters and services than other women.<sup>7</sup>

The ethnic composition of King County is as follows:

- Caucasian: 75.3 percent
- Black/African American: six percent
- Asian: 13.3 percent
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 0.6 percent
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 0.8 percent
- Two or more ethnicities: four percent
- Hispanic/Latino (counted in other categories; may be any race or ethnicity): 7.4 percent

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<sup>6</sup> The population and demographic information is derived from data provided by the 2008 King County Annual Growth Report, the American Fact Finder Data Set: 2006-2008 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, and 1999 Federal Poverty Level from factfinder.census.gov. The DV service statistics are from reports filed by county-funded agencies for the 2008 calendar year.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Cris Sullivan

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County-funded DV agencies report serving far more Black/African American (19.8 percent), Hispanic/Latino (17.4 percent), and American Indian and Alaska Native clients (2.3 percent) than their proportions in the general public, and far fewer Caucasian (23.1 percent) and Asian (2.7 percent) clients. However, there is a large number reported as other (30.7 percent), which is difficult to interpret.

Along with the range of ethnicities in King County is an astounding range of languages. United Way's 2007 Community Assessment found that 117 different languages are spoken in King County. Some of the more common are Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Tagalog, Mon-Khmer languages, and various African languages. Nearly one-quarter of King County residents speak a language other than English in their homes<sup>8</sup>, and nearly 11 percent speak English "less than very well." The members of ethnic communities that speak different languages are growing. The majority of newly arriving immigrants settling into King County include people from the former Soviet Union, Somalia, and Burma. This diversity is a characteristic of the county sub-regions, as well as Seattle. For example, South King County has been seeing an increase in East and West African populations, and both East and South King County are also seeing an increase of refugees from Burma and Bhutan.

For the county-funded DV agencies, the language differences are even more striking. While only one-quarter of the county's residents speak a language other than English at home, DV agencies report that three-fifths of their clients speak a language other than English as their primary language. This diversity of cultures and languages creates challenges for accessing and delivering DV services.

For DV survivors born outside the United States, even if language is not an obstacle, knowledge of the laws or how to report the violence, or cultural norms related to relationships and traditions, can become obstacles. Some view the police with ambivalence or fear. In some cultures, there is a stigma concerning a survivor seeking help outside of the immediate family, or even seeking help at all. Additional cultural challenges for survivors may include shame, fear of children being taken away, fear of being deported or losing their residency status, and fear of community banishment or of being disowned by their extended family.

Community-based DV agencies must make literature and other resources about DV available in the language survivors understand, or they will have even more difficulty understanding where to turn for assistance or what their rights are under the law.<sup>9</sup> Addressing the needs of the survivor in a manner they can understand and accept is critical, so cultural competency is important. Cultural competency refers to the practice by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, ethnic backgrounds, and beliefs. Survivors must feel that they are valued and treated with respect and dignity. Survivors of DV often feel more comfortable seeking services from an agency that identifies with their same culture. Consequently, culturally-specific services and providers are important options.

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<sup>8</sup>The percent likely varies in different areas or jurisdictions. The 2009-2010 City of Bellevue Human Service Report found that one-third of the city's residents spoke a language other than English.

<sup>9</sup>Senturia, K, Sullivan, M, & Ciske, S. (2001). Cultural Issues Affecting Domestic Violence Service Utilization in Ethnic and Hard to Reach Populations. Public Health – Seattle & King County.

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Community-based DV agencies have thought carefully about the issues surrounding service delivery to special populations. Overcoming barriers to access due to cultural factors must be considered as part of the service delivery package. In King County, nine organizations are dedicated to serving specific cultural or ethnic survivors of DV, and two serve other groups with special needs (deaf or hearing impaired; and lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender). Other agencies do not target specific cultural groups, but strive for cultural competency. See Table B on pages 20 and 21 for details.

To achieve cultural competency requires the following:

1. Additional time is needed. It is likely to require additional time and/or resources to provide services to survivors from different cultural communities. An agency serving a specific cultural community may need to spend time conducting additional outreach, establishing a presence in and gaining the trust of the community before survivors will come forward for services. Serving a limited English speaking survivor may require not only paying for an interpreter, but also scheduling extra time for every appointment.
2. Specialized language services are needed. The DV service providers have a limited number of staff who speak the survivors' languages. The agencies that do have multiple language capacity are often over stretched and their multi-lingual advocates are extremely limited in their availability. Interpreter availability for some languages can be extremely limited, and some ethnic communities are small causing more of a chance for an ethical conflict when the interpreter knows both of the parties involved.
3. Specialized outreach is needed. The traditional means of spreading the word about DV services have been through the media, primarily newspapers and television. Expanded specialized outreach occurring through alternative forms of social media, such as radio and television programs broadcasted in languages other than English is needed.
4. Another challenge that service providers face in working with different cultures is determining how DV incidents are viewed and reported within each culture. Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey,<sup>10</sup> conducted in 2008, showed that African-American/Black and American Indian/Alaska Native women had higher rates of reporting DV incidents to law enforcement than women from other communities of color, while Asian and Pacific Islander communities had the lowest DV reporting rates. The report shows that agencies serving these specific cultures are gradually developing strategies designed to break through the silence about incidences of violence. In addition, they have been reaching out to the broader DV response system by offering their assistance in dealing with DV issues impacting members of their community.
5. South King County is significantly impacted by DV. The South King Council of Human Services released a report in 2005 entitled A Matter of Need, which stated that "immigrants, needy children, isolated seniors and poor families are seeking a better life in South King County in greater numbers than ever before." The report went on to state that more than one out of every four people living in South King County is a person of color,

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<sup>10</sup> Catalano, S., Smith, E., Snyder, H. Ph.D., & Rand, M. (2008) Female Victims of Violence. Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey. NCJ 228356.



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and that more families live below the federal poverty level than in any other part of the county. Community-based DV agencies noted that an increasing number of clients are moving to South King County, but continue to utilize services in Seattle.

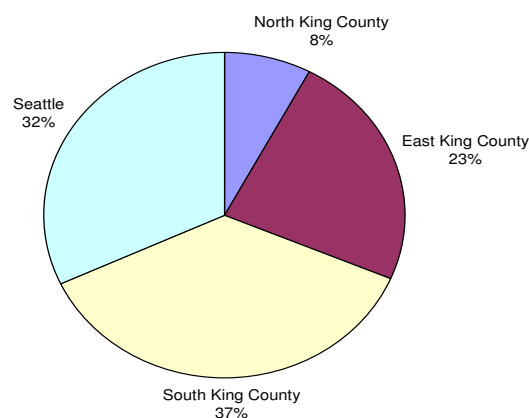
6. Collaboration between agencies is important. Some survivors may actually feel more comfortable accessing services outside of their own communities because of confidentiality concerns or embarrassment. In addition, not every agency can provide every service a DV survivor may require (for example, many of the culturally specific DV programs do not have emergency or transitional housing services). Therefore it is important for all agencies to work to improve their cultural competency, and provide multi-lingual access to their services and culturally specific programs. Programs serving multiple communities must collaborate with culturally specific providers to promote access to quality services to survivors from a variety of cultures.

#### **B. Geographic distribution**

Most of King County's residents live in the western, urbanized portion of the county. From the 2005 estimated population numbers, based on the 2000 U.S. Census, the population in the county's sub-regions was as follows: Seattle's population was 562,984; North King County was 138,077; East King County was 411,528, and South King County was 645,977<sup>11</sup>.

The following pie chart illustrates how the population of King County is distributed across the various sub-regions.

**King County Population by Sub-Region**



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<sup>11</sup> The sub-regions are defined here by school districts. Seattle's sub-region consists of the Seattle school districts. North King County consists of the Northshore, Shoreline, and the Woodinville portion of the Lake Washington school district. East King County consists of the Bellevue, Issaquah, Lake Washington, Mercer Island, Riverview, Skykomish, and Snoqualmie School districts. The South King County sub-region consists of the Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, South Central, Enumclaw, Tahoma, and Vashon school districts.

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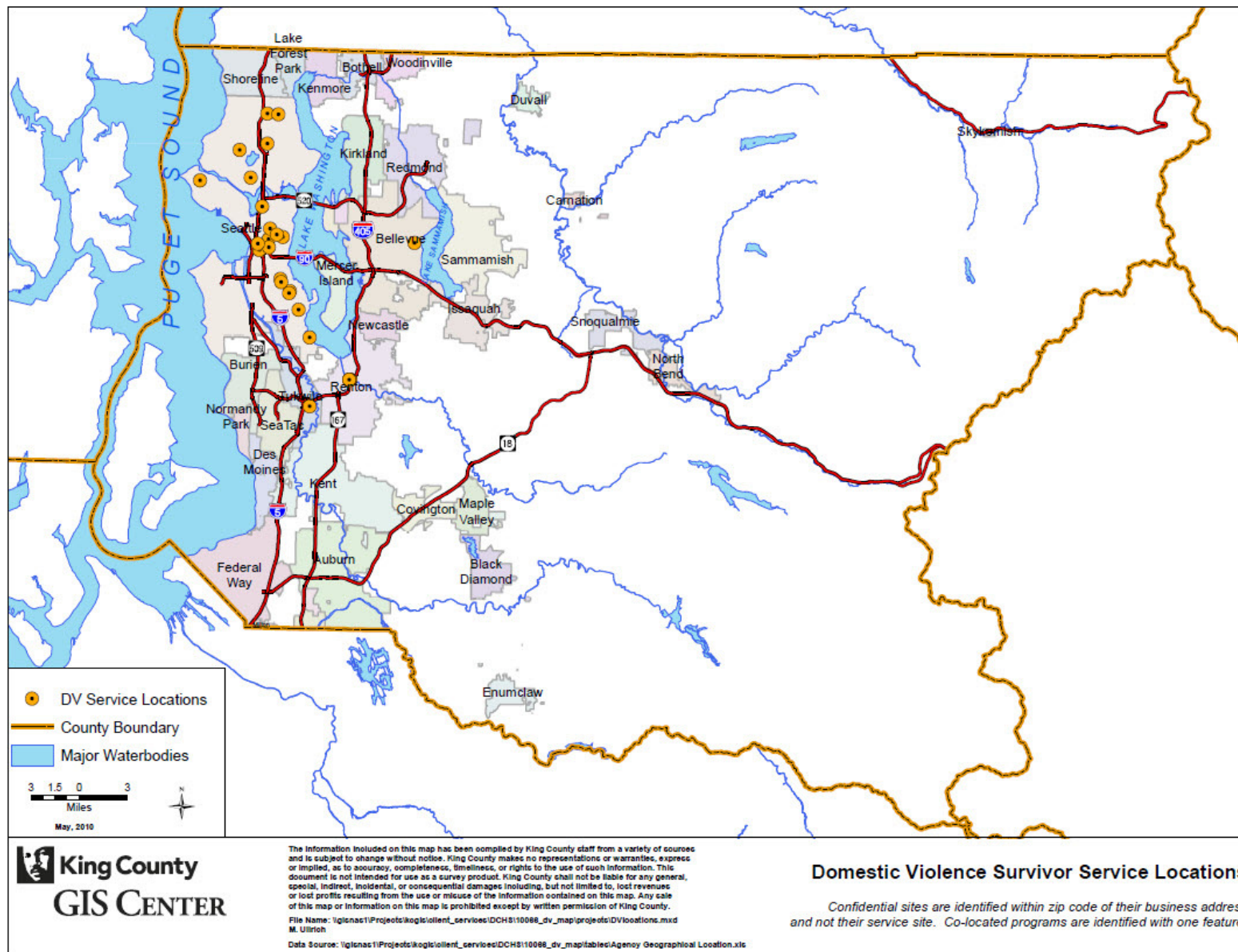
The map on the next page shows the main locations of DV survivor service providers. There are 17 different agencies in King County. Fourteen of the 17 agencies are located in Seattle. All 11 agencies that target special populations have their primary offices in Seattle. There are three main service providers with offices located outside Seattle; Eastside Domestic Violence Program on the east side, Domestic Abuse Women's Network in Tukwila, and the YWCA in the south end (the YWCA also has a Seattle location).

Domestic violence agencies recognize the need to serve survivors in all areas of the county, and try to make their services and programs more accessible through temporary service locations, space-sharing agreements with other agencies, or by meeting clients or offering support groups in other safe locations. Still, it is clear that survivors living outside of Seattle do not have the same degree of geographic access or choice of services available to Seattle residents. This may be especially true for survivors from specific cultures or special needs groups. Survivors may have to travel long distances for service, and transportation in the county can be challenging, especially for survivors who depend on public transportation.

Agencies that try to expand their services geographically are faced with additional expenses for office rent for temporary service locations, mileage and staff time to travel to multiple locations, or for bus tokens and other forms of travel assistance for the people they serve. These measures increase the total cost of service provision, and may be vulnerable to reduction when budgets are tight.

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**C. Current distribution of Department of Community and Human Services funding for domestic violence survivor services**

Table C lists our region's community-based DV agencies, and indicates which ones receive funding from DCHS, and whether the agency targets services to culturally specific or special needs groups, or is located in the south or east sub-regions of King County. The DCHS funds have supported the three agencies located in and primarily serving the east and south geographic sub-regions of the county, in addition to agencies located in Seattle. It also shows that DCHS funds have supported some of the agencies that serve culturally specific or special needs populations.

Three different funding sources are used by DCHS to help support DV agencies. The CSO funding, which inspired this proviso, is the funding that in 2010 is largely provided through the one-time transfer of GF dollars. This funding has historically been allocated non-competitively via line-item designations in the county budget ordinance. A second source of funding comes from housing dollars that are specifically for emergency shelter and/or transitional housing programs (including Emergency Shelter Grant, Transitional Housing Operating and Rental Assistance, and the operating portion of the Regional Affordable Housing Program). These dollars are allocated via a competitive RFP process. The third source of funding comes from MIDD dollars that are specifically for mental health and substance abuse services, including a children's DV response team. The funds were used to expand an existing program and no competitive RFP process was used.

Funding distribution methods will be discussed in the next section of this report.

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**Table C. 2010 King County DCHS Funding for DV Agencies**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>DCHS Funding in 2010</b>					
	<b>2010 King County CSO Funds (includes GF transfer)</b>	<b>Housing and Community Development Funds (specifically for shelter or transitional housing)<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>MIDD Funds (specifically for mental health and substance abuse)</b>	<b>2010 Total DCHS Funding</b>	<b>Culturally Specific or Special Needs Populations</b>	<b>South or East County Sub-region?</b>
Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services	\$44,753			\$44,753	Deaf and Hard of Hearing	
Asian Counseling and Referral Services					Asian Americans Pacific Islanders	
Asian Pacific Islander Women & Family Safety Center					Human Trafficking and Asian/Pacific Islanders	
Chaya					South Asian	
Consejo Counseling and Referral Services	\$65,798	\$38,350		\$104,148	Latino/ Hispanic	
Domestic Abuse Women's Network	\$128,352	\$80,550	\$68,550	\$277,452		Yes-south county service area
Eastside Domestic Violence Program	\$161,923	\$121,846	\$68,550	\$352,319		Yes-east county service area
Jewish Family Service					Jewish Survivors	
King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence (provides education to providers) <sup>4</sup>	\$20,610		\$69,670	\$90,280		
New Beginnings	\$11,901	\$53,400	\$68,550	\$133,851		
Northwest Family Life					Christian based	

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Agency	DCHS Funding in 2010				Culturally Specific or Special Needs Populations	South or East County Sub-region?
	2010 King County CSO Funds (includes GF transfer)	Housing and Community Development Funds (specifically for shelter or transitional housing) <sup>2</sup>	MIDD Funds (specifically for mental health and substance abuse)	2010 Total DCHS Funding		
Northwest Network	\$25,142			\$25,142	Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender	
Refugee Women's Alliance	\$44,753		\$54,275	\$99,028	Refugee and Immigrant women	
Salvation Army - Catherine Booth House	\$11,901			\$11,901		
Seattle Indian Health Board	\$44,753			\$44,753	American Indian and Alaska Native	
Solid Ground - Broadview Shelter/Transitional Hsg	\$11,620	\$109,416		\$121,036		
United Indians of All Tribes					American Indian families	
YWCA	\$179,570	\$30,000		\$209,570	African American <sup>3</sup>	Yes-south county location
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$751,076</b>	<b>\$433,562</b>	<b>\$553,595<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>\$1,738,233</b>		

1. Total MIDD also includes \$224,000 for Sound Mental Health to provide mental health services for DV agencies participating in the Children's DV Response Team
2. Some of the agencies may also receive federal McKinney funding support for their transitional housing. That funding is not included here.
3. The African American program is located in Seattle.
4. The Coalition is included in this table because of its integral role in coordinating and advocating for DV direct service agencies. However, it is not counted as one of the 17 direct service agencies.

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Community-based agencies have been directly impacted by the current economic climate, which impacts both public and private funding. With the economic downturn of the past two years, many agencies have received or are facing potential cuts to federal, state, and local government funding. In addition, agencies have seen a corresponding decline in private, corporate, and in-kind donations. Agencies rely on these donations to pay for operational costs that are not typically available from government or grant funders. These private donations allow agencies to utilize county and other government funds to pay for direct services.

Selected DV stakeholders were interviewed for this report. They identified the following three common challenges related to decreased funding for their particular programs:

1. Maintaining adequate service levels
2. Finding sufficient affordable housing or housing subsidies to be able to move clients out of DV shelters, and out of transitional housing
3. Filling important gaps in services.

#### Maintaining adequate service levels

Stakeholders feel increased pressure to provide the same level of services to survivors with fewer funds. This creates an added burden of stress and burnout for staff. In 2009, a culturally specific agency closed its doors to new clients, as they did not have the staff hours to provide further services. The director of another DV program faced a similar situation due to staff burnout and high staff turnover rates, temporarily closing their doors to new clients and referring them to other agencies.

#### Finding stable affordable housing

Stakeholders reported that the availability of stable affordable housing is an essential need of a DV survivor, and the lack of that housing affects not only the survivor but the agency's ability to serve additional clients. If there are insufficient affordable housing units or rental subsidies available, survivors have nowhere to go and consequently stay in the shelter or transitional housing longer, and the agency must turn away new shelter clients due to lack of space. Alternatively, the survivor may leave but continue to cycle between shelters, or return to the abuser. The lack of affordable housing or rental subsidies means that agencies are able to help fewer survivors move into permanent housing and they have increased shelter turn-away rates.

#### Filling important gaps in services

Stakeholders reported that little if any money is going towards prevention, and prevention efforts are a critical component of an effective DV response system. Prevention efforts could include public campaigns such as the Love Shouldn't Hurt campaign in the 1990's. In addition, programs such as Kids' Club or the Children's Response Team that serve children are still scarce. The Family Violence Prevention Fund held a congressional briefing this year about the impact DV has on child development when children witness DV, underscoring the importance of

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these services. Additionally, very limited funds are available to assist survivors with civil legal issues such as representation at divorce hearings, child custody hearings, and protection order hearings.

In summary, Section II has shown there is a need for community-based services that respond effectively and competently to the needs of different ethnic and cultural populations, and that residents of all geographic sub-regions must have access to services. These are challenges in a time when provider agencies also report they are already struggling to continue the services they have been providing, and they see continuing funding gaps in our region's DV response system.

### **III. Assessment of competitive and noncompetitive domestic violence funding distribution models**

The proviso asks for an assessment of competitive and noncompetitive funding distribution models (and specifically, the model used by Washington State DSHS) and whether these approaches could be used for the county's DV funds. These are two very different approaches, and each has strengths and weaknesses.

#### **A. Competitive distribution model**

The City of Seattle and United Way of King County both use a competitive RFP model to allocate their DV funds. The City of Seattle held two separate competitive RFPs in 2009 that distributed \$1.5 million in funding. Both RFPs were for a two-year period. One was specifically for community advocacy and comprehensive services; the other was specifically for DV shelters and housing. Each RFP required the services to be directed to Seattle residents. United Way's RFP covered their July 2010 - June 2011 program year, allocating nearly \$2.5 million to a wide variety of DV services throughout the region, excluding shelter operations.

Many of the county's suburban cities also use a competitive RFP; however, their RFPs differ from Seattle and United Way in that they are general human service RFPs that are not specific to DV. While this means their example is not directly applicable to the current discussion, 17 of the suburban cities have joined together to<sup>12</sup> create a common application process for human service agencies so that these agencies do not have to spend an excessive amount of time preparing 17 totally different applications, but can use much of the same material for each city. These 17 cities have established a common website for application materials, and are working toward aligning performance measures, outcomes, and reporting requirements. However, each jurisdiction still has its own funding priorities and makes its own decisions from among the applications submitted to the specific city.

While DCHS also conducts competitive RFP's for the majority of its services, it has not done so specifically for DV services to date. Regardless of the funding jurisdiction, source, or intent, the competitive process is generally similar. It involves agencies submitting an application or

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<sup>12</sup> The 17 cities are Auburn, Bellevue, Bothell, Burien, Covington, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kent, Kirkland, Redmond, Renton, Sammamish, SeaTac, Shoreline, Tukwila, and Woodinville.



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proposal in response to an RFP issued by the funder. The funder generally specifies the scope of services, the population, the outcomes, the approximate amount of funds available, and any other considerations. Common to all RFP processes is an evaluation of the proposals against set criteria, a review of the agency's budget and history of performance, culminating in the selection of the agency or agencies most likely to perform well. This proposal evaluation process usually involves review by a team or panel, often including reviewers or experts from outside of the funder's organization.

The selected agencies may or may not receive their requested level of funding. The level of funding is based on specific considerations including, but not limited to, the agency's proposed scope of work and budget for the program, the financial feasibility of the proposal, and the total funds available. The subsequent contract is then performance-based, tying the actual reimbursement to performance.

Human services RFP's can be held on an annual cycle, but are often held on cycles of two years, or even three or more years. Funding for the intervening years is non-competitive, although always subject to annual appropriation.

**Assessment:** There are strengths and weaknesses to a competitive distribution model and depending on the perspective of funders or providers – what appears as a strength to one may be a weakness to another, or may be mitigated.

#### Strengths:

- **Responsiveness:** it creates regular opportunities for government to re-examine priorities for funding in light of ongoing and emerging needs and changing revenue situations. It allows for regular coordination of priorities with funding provided by other programs (such as housing), and the ability to flexibly move programs or capacity between agencies when necessary.
- **Transparency:** the priorities and criteria for funding are publicly advertised, and the selection process is objective, involving a panel of reviewers evaluating proposals based on the advertised priorities and criteria. The agencies most likely to perform best in addressing those priorities and needs are selected. This could include new agencies that have not previously received funding.
- **Accountability:** limited taxpayer dollars can be directed to agencies most likely to perform effectively, as well as efficiently. Contracts are performance based creating built-in accountability.

It is for many of these same reasons that the 2006 King County Auditor's Report on the Community Services Division's contracting process recommended performance-based contracting and periodic competitive processes to select contracting agencies.

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#### **Weaknesses:**

- Agencies would periodically compete for funds, which can create unpredictability and possibly instability for some agencies or programs if funding changes dramatically. This can contribute to difficulties in retaining trained staff and in planning programs, staffing and operations. To the extent the agency has long-term fixed commitments can be problematic.
- Competition may make it more difficult for agencies to collaborate and cooperate to ensure a range of quality services are available county-wide.
- RFP's take staff time, for both the agency staff and the funders.
- Agencies that have the most resources are often at an advantage in competitive processes; agencies with less capacity, or whose staff are less proficient in writing proposals are often at a disadvantage.
- The competitive pressure to maintain performance could lead to agencies overpromising, or focusing on quantity rather than quality. It could also encourage creaming; that is, choosing to serve people who face the fewest barriers and are therefore the most likely to achieve the required outcomes, rather than those who need services the most.

#### **B. Noncompetitive formula model**

The state DSHS uses a noncompetitive, formula-driven model with targeted add-ons to distribute its statewide DV dollars to DV shelters and shelter related services. King County DCHS has not used a formula model to distribute the county's DV funds to date (these funds have been distributed noncompetitively, but the process has been historically based on line item designations in the annual budget ordinance rather than a formula). DCHS has experience using formula models, e.g. funding for Youth and Family Services Agencies has been distributed by formula.

Formula models provide a share of available funds to each agency that is qualified to receive a share. Formula models must establish which agencies qualify for a share, and then determine the basis by which each agency's share is calculated.

The state's formula model was established in 1993 as the result of discussions with key stakeholders across the state. The formula is calculated using a ratio based on population and geographic area. The minimum agency allocation is computed annually, dividing 73 percent of the total available funds by the number of eligible programs. The remaining funds are distributed in two ways, agencies serving counties with a large geographic area and/or population receive additional funds above the minimum amount, and agencies identified as serving cultural needs and providing services receive a minimum amount that is not based on geographic or population size.

Another example of a formula distribution process is the county's funding for the YFSA's. A council motion in the 1990's established the YFSA system, where each school district is served

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by a YFSA (or in the case of the large Seattle district, several YFSA's), and the formula for funding them. The formula allocates each YFSA an equal minimum amount in order to provide for a base level of support, and then provides additional funding over and above that amount depending on the number of students in the district and number living in unincorporated King County<sup>13</sup>. The policy provides for adjustments in the formula if there are annexations or incorporations, or if it is necessary to change the number of providers.

A formula amount would need considerable planning up front to design both the system for qualifying for a base amount and the distribution of funds.

**Assessment:** There are strengths and weaknesses to a non-competitive distribution model and depending on the perspective of funders or providers – what appears as a strength to one may be a weakness to another, or may be mitigated.

#### Strengths:

- A non-competitive formula model would guarantee at least some support from year to year for those agencies that qualify for a share, although the actual level of that support is dependent on how much funding is available each year. While the funding may vary, agencies would be confident of at least a minimal amount each. This would provide increased stability, allowing agencies to plan ahead more confidently.
- Funding based on a formula eliminates agencies competing against each other. This may foster cooperation and collaboration between agencies to better support a system approach.
- Not having to respond to RFP's saves staff time for funders and agencies.
- Providers may not be tempted to overpromise or cream clients.

For many of these reasons, the community-based agencies strongly prefer the formula model.

#### Weaknesses:

- It is not effective for service provision to establish a formula for a very small and/or declining amount of funds; the dollars are likely to be spread too thinly to accomplish any significant performance. Funders need the flexibility to focus limited funds on specific needs.
- Once a formula is established, there are challenges to changing it, should there be changes in funding or priorities.

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<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that in the last two budget ordinances, the council has deviated from the proposed budget, which was based on the formula, and allocated different amounts to the YFSA's. In 2009, five of the 16 YFSA's received significantly more, and one agency received significantly less. In 2010, two of the 16 YFSA agencies received increases and one agency received a decrease.

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- Agencies that qualify for a share may see their share as an entitlement. It can be challenging for new agencies to break in or changes to be made.
- It can be challenging to hold formula-funded agencies accountable for performance if a formula allocates a non competitive amount intended as a base.

#### IV. Recommendations

Each approach to fund distribution has strengths and weaknesses and all are subjective. In the gathering of information for this report King County DV agencies voiced their preference for a formula distribution model. However a formula distribution or combination formula target model is only feasible if there is sufficient funding *and* that funding level is relatively stable. That is not currently the case in King County.

The DCHS recommends transitioning to a competitive RFP process on a two-year cycle. The DCHS also recommends closer regional coordination with other DV, basic needs and housing funders including United Way of King County, suburban cities, the City of Seattle, with the primary outcome of ensuring access to services for; those living outside the City of Seattle, members of culturally specific groups, special needs populations, and unincorporated King County residents. Additional specific outcomes for individual agencies' services would be those related to increased safety for the survivors they are serving, particularly through the provision of emergency shelter and counseling to help survivors create effective safety plans. Measures related to emergency shelter and safety plans are currently included in DCHS contracts.

A periodic RFP will allow the county work with partners to set targets based on the new countywide strategic plan which emphasizes strengthening coordination with other jurisdictions and the newly required update to the human services framework policies. It allows the county to target limited funds to respond to emerging needs or changed circumstances, and provides greater transparency and accountability. Additionally given the concentration of DV services in the Seattle area, an RFP coordinated with other funders provides the opportunity to improve geographic access to services. The recommendation to hold the RFP only every two years would also mitigate two of the negative aspects of RFP processes for agencies. First, it provides some measure of predictability since agencies would not need to compete for the second year of funding. Second, the agencies and county staff would be able to reduce staff time preparing proposals.

An RFP would allow for increased coordination between available funders and funding sources to ensure that funding is not duplicative and that the county is maximizing resources. This is especially important in the case of DV shelters, which receive funding through a housing RFP, as well as through the current CSO line-item designation process.

Using 2011 as a transition year, with the RFP covering 2012 and future years, would allow time to work integrate the strategic plan and human services framework policies with stakeholder processes to plan for the RFP. It should be noted, however, that a transition period may not be

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possible if there is a dramatic change in funding from 2010 levels. If that is the case, the RFP planning would need to commence immediately, and would cover the 2011 funds.

We look forward to working with our partners.